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ABSTRACT

This report analyzes data gathered through surveys of state administrators of child care and early childhood programs. The report is in three sections: (1) the state of child care and early education in the mid-1990s; (2) the relative level of commitment of each state in 1994; and (3) the likely impact of 1996 U.S. welfare reform legislation. The report indicates that: (1) per-child state levels of commitment to child care and early education varied widely nationally and between neighboring states; (2) state commitments were inadequate to serve the many children and families that needed help-even in states with relatively higher levels of effort; (3) many states with large proportions of poor children did not show a commitment to child care and early education; (4) state commitment depends more on state "will" than state "wallet"--some states with fewer resources invested relatively more than states with greater resources; and (5) generally, states placed child care and early education low on their list of state priorities. The report recommends that financial commitment by all sectors be increased, and that funds be used for good quality, comprehensive services that help prevent dependency now and in the future. Five appendices provide methodological information, states' unmet needs for child care, supporting data, estimated 1997 state allocations for the new child care and development block grants, and state-by-state fact sheets. (EAJ)

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